

"Old Tales"

from the early days
of the

Soddy-Daisy Fire Department

As told by Jerry H. Smith

In the Beginning! The Soddy-Daisy Fire Department came into existence soon after the city was incorporated in June of 1969. It was originally staffed by the North Hamilton County Rescue Squad. Although they were two separate organizations it was hard to separate them from the inception of the fire department, it was mostly the same people operated both organizations but responded with different equipment. The rescue trucks were parked at the old "Daisy DX" Station (now a restaurant next to Daisy Church of God). During the day, calls would come from the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department Dispatcher (usually to the pay phone at the gas station) and the attendant on duty would start a "call out", and at night a call was made to a members home and the same procedure would be used for contacting persons by phone. A Plectron Alerting System was soon put in service to alert members by radio as Soddy-Daisy established a police and fire dispatcher.

There was not a fire engine until early in 1970 when a small 1952 Ford with a midship 500 g.p.m. pump was borrowed from Fort Oglethorpe Ga. Fire Department, which at the time was one of the best-equipped departments in the area.

Wayne Daniel was the chief of the rescue squad, so he became the first Fire Chief for Soddy-Daisy. Bill Wright was first assistant and Roger McGarity was the second assistant.

Sometime around late 1971 and early 1972, the trend lead toward more separation of the two organizations and some members became members of one or the other, but most remained a member of both.

The Ahrens Fox and the Tanker

After the city incorporated, they began searching for a fire engine to purchase. Sometime June or early July of 1970 a 1950 Ahrens Fox 4-door cab with a Hercules 6

cylinder engine with hose and some equipment was purchased from George Spencer for \$10,000.00. The drivers and officers went to Chattanooga Fire Hall #1 for instruction and briefing on the use of the pumper and how to drive this big apparatus. She was named "Beulah". The Ahrens Fox only carried 300 gallons of water and the city had very few working fire hydrants so a water tanker had to be found. A 1955 or 56 Chevrolet truck was purchased with a 2000-gallon tank and it was our new tanker. It had previously been used as a Gulf fuel tanker and according to stories, had been wrecked before and it caused it to run out of line. Looking back, that tanker was a dangerous piece of equipment. The tanker had an 11 horsepower Briggs & Stratton gas powered pump with 250-gpm capacity and fought a lot of fires and was the subject of a lot of interesting stories for several years. That tanker was replaced with a brand new one around 1978.

New Fire Hall (#1) The fire trucks were moved into the new fire station at Card Rd. and Dayton Pike sometime in June of 1970. It was a fine building and the only thing that the fire department had that was new. Many members spent a lot of Saturday nights playing cards or just shooting the bull at the new Fire Station. The Rescue trucks remained at the Daisy DX service station.

The first new fire engine

Late in 1972, the city took delivery of a new bright yellow Pierce 1000 g.p.m. Ford Fire Engine. This had to be the most beautiful thing on the road at the time. It did more for the attitude and morale of the firemen than a shot in the arm. It also brought some new firemen to the department. Everyone wanted to be a driver. This engine is still in service today.



SODDY-DAISY FIRE DEPARTMENT



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On April 20, 2006 City Manager Cagle reported that notification was received from ISO for the new Public Protection Classification of 3. She said that the City is the only, all volunteer fire department with a Class 3 rating and praised the department, recognizing the officers who worked diligently over the past several years to acquire this rating.

As of January 2008 Soddy-Daisy Volunteer Fire Department is comprised of approximately 50 members covering: Three (3) Fire Stations, Four (4) Engine Companies, Three (3) Ladder Companies, Three (3) Medical/Rescue Trucks, One (1) Heavy Rescue Truck, Two (2) Brush Trucks, One (1) Reserve Engine and last but not least, the Pride of Soddy-Daisy Fire Department, "BEULAH" a 1950 Ahrens Fox 4-door Custom Cab Truck.

Soddy-Daisy Fire Department is an all Volunteer fire department that is funded by the City of Soddy-Daisy. The fire department command staff is comprised of a Chief, Assistant Chief and Deputy Assistant Chief, along with a Captain and two Lieutenants for each Station.

The Fire Department not only provides fire protection for the residents of the city, they also provide first responder Emergency Medical Services, Fire safety and fire educational programs to the schools and many other organizations. A Scholarship Fund was established by the Fire Department and Fire Fighter Association to encourage continuing education of members of the Fire Department after graduation from high school.

The Soddy-Daisy Fire Fighters Association was established as a non-profit organization, to assist in the organization and distribution of charitable contributions provided by the residents and businesses in the Soddy-Daisy area. Among these endeavors are support services to the Fire Department, assistance to families in need after a fire, and to work with the community in providing Christmas for Kids in the area. (If you would like to learn more on this, visit our web site

www.soddydaisychristmasforthekids.com.

Another local charitable fund that the Fire Department supports is the Jim Wilson Fund, which supports the purchase of coats and needs of kids at Soddy-Daisy Middle School. Based on the fact that Jim Wilson gave his time as a member of the Fire Department, the Association in return supports the Jim Wilson Fund.



Home Fire Safety Tips

- 1. Smoke Detectors on every level of your home, test monthly and change batteries yearly.*
- 2. Plan your escape from fire.*
- 3. Keep an eye on smokers.*
- 4. Never leave cooking unattended.*
- 5. Keep space heaters at least 3 ft from anything that will burn.*
- 6. Remember, Matches and Lighters are tools, not toys.*
- 7. Run cool water over burns.*
- 8. Use electricity safely.*
- 9. Crawl low under smoke.*
- 10. Stop, Drop, and Roll.*

Things to do and people to contact After the fire Considerations

Insurance and other Assistance

Contact your insurance company as soon as possible.
If you are renting contact property owner or owner's insurance
If you are not insured contact your Lawyer or the IRS for directions.
Contact the American Red Cross (831) 462-2881 for disaster relief Services.

Your Property

Secure the Site from further damage by weather, theft or vandalism. This is the owner's responsibility.
Check with Fire Department to see if utilities are shut off and if structure is safe to enter.
Inventory damaged personal property.

NOTE: in detail the quantity, description, cost, how long you have had the item, the damage sustained and replacement cost. Take photographs if possible. Do not throw away damaged goods until the inventory is done.

Other Tips

Do not contract for estimating, inventory or repair service without first consulting your insurance agent.
Save all receipts for expenses incurred due to fire.

If You Have To Leave Your Home:

Remember to take the following:

Identification
Medicines
Eyeglasses, hearing aids or other personal aids.
Valuables- credit cards, checkbooks, insurance policies, savings account books, money, jewelry etc.

If You Relocate notify:

The Fire Department (423) 332-5323
Your Employer
Delivery Services
Family and Friends
Your Insurance Agent
The Mortgage Company
The Post Office

